

Approved 04/17/2014

Exeter Fire District

(February 27, 2014)

(Budget Hearing)

Call to Order

Chairman Scott Kettelle called the February 2014 budget hearing of the Exeter Fire District to order at 7:11pm. Present were commissioners Scott Kettelle, Kevin Rooney, Patricia Whitford, Charles Franklin and Bill Nievera. Ms. MacDonald, district treasurer, and Peter Ruggiero, fire district attorney were also present. There were 9 members of the public in attendance.

Presentation of Budgets

Mr. Nievera gave a brief overview of the administrative budget request. He noted that the 3% budgeted salary increase for our collector and the addition of a new line item for legal fees had constituted the entire increase for this request.

The EFD administration's current request (\$27,466) includes an increase of 12.3% over last year and will require a 2/3 majority vote at the annual meeting.

Curt Varone (President, EVFD#1) presented his amended budget stating that several unresolved issues have been and are being deferred from year to year. The replacement of the "Jaws of Life", the

refurbishment of tanker 6, to push out the purchase of a new tanker for 10 years and the replacement of older equipment are not being addressed. Additionally, he is not putting aside funds needed to purchase new vehicles at the needed schedule. Mr. Varone all but guarantees a double digit increase during the next budget cycle. The EVFD#1 current request (\$192,100) includes an increase of 5.5% (reduced from 20.9%) over last year.

Jackie Henderson (Treasurer, EVFC #2) was on hand to present their budget request. There were no questions/comments for Ms. Henderson.

The EVFC#2 current request (\$157,100) includes an increase of 2.9% over last year.

Mr. Kettelle presented the budget request for the newly planned Exeter Fire District EMS Service. It was explained that staffing would go from 6 full time paid personnel to 4, plus a number of per-diem employees to fill out each shift to supply 24/7 coverage. There will also be a part time chief working 20 hours/week to oversee the operation. Also stated was that volunteerism would be encouraged and fostered. Volunteers could, (and will) in the future, replace some of the per-diem employees. The membership will be asked to approve this EMS restructuring during this meeting.

The Exeter Fire District, EMS services is a new line item and is requesting \$485,814 in support from the fire district.

Mr. Kettelle (President, EEDC) presented the budget for the Dispatch Corporation stating that their main increase was in needing to hold a deductible in the event the center was hit again by lightning strikes. These strikes cause multiple thousands of dollars of damage. The deductible for the center was raised to \$20,000 but, negotiated down to the \$10,000 to \$15,000 range. The other increases reflected an increase in health care for the 4 dispatchers and a budgeted increase for a bookkeeper to handle monthly invoices and payroll matters.

The EEDC current request (\$366,716) includes an increase of 5.4% over last year.

Tom McMillan made several inquiries of the fire companies as to how funds were put aside for the purchase of new vehicles. Mr. Kettelle explained that each organization tries to earmark an amount of money in a vehicle replacement fund for that very purpose. Drawing those accounts down to make the budget hurt less do not help. At some point in time you're going to need a new engine, tanker or rescue vehicle. Mr. Kettelle also stated that the cost of a new engine could be \$400,000 and a new rescue vehicle in the range of \$220,000 to \$240,000.

With no other comments or questions Mr. Nievera moved (Mr. Rooney second) closing the budget hearing at 8:10pm. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bill Nievera, Clerk

Exeter Fire District